

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 NEW DE 03753 171024Z  
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01  
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 OMB-01 AID-05 /075 W  
-----171034Z 077502 /21

O R 170909Z MAR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1922  
INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY  
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA  
AMCONSUL MADRAS  
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO  
AMEMBASSY DACCA  
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
USLO PEKING  
AMCONSUL HONG KONG  
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 3753

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, IN  
SUBJECT: INDIAN ELECTIONS: FIRST DAY'S POLLING PEACEFUL AND HEAVY

REF: NEW DELHI 3728

1. FROM ALL INDICATIONS, VOTER PARTICIPATION IN THE FIRST DAY

OF POLLING THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY WAS UNPREDECEDENTEDLY HIGH.  
NEWSPAPER ACCOUNTS REPORT THAT GENERALLY 60 TO 70 PERCENT OF THE  
ELIGIBLE VOTERS CAST THEIR BALLOTS, ALTHOUGH IN A FEW AREAS  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 NEW DE 03753 171024Z

PARTICIPATION WAS REPORTEDLY AS LOW AS 40 TO 50 PERCENT. IN  
OTHER CONSTITUENCIES, HOWEVER, PARTICULARLY THE SO-CALLED  
"PRESTIGE" CONTESTS (E.G. BANSI LAL'S RACE IN HARYANA), VOTER  
PARTICIPATION WAS AS HIGH AS 80 PERCENT. (NOTE: NATIONWIDE VOTER  
PARTICIPATION IN 1971 WAS 55.29 PERCENT.) OUR LOCALS REPORT THAT  
THE TURNOUT YESTERDAY IN OLD DELHI AS WELL AS THE NEW SUBURBAN  
AREAS WAS PARTICULARLY HEAVY.

2. WE GATHER FROM PRESS REPORTS THAT THE VOTING WAS CONDUCTED IN AN ESSENTIALLY PEACEFUL ATMOSPHERE. SOME INSTANCES OF VIOLENCE AND DISRUPTION APPARENTLY DID OCCUR IN CERTAIN AREAS, NOTABLY BIHAR AND WEST BENGAL, WHERE SUCH INCIDENTS WERE COMMON IN THE PAST. WE GATHER THAT THE SCALE OF DISORDERS WAS APPRECIABLY LESS THAN IN PREVIOUS ELECTIONS. REPORTS FROM THE PRESS AND OUR LOCALS INDICATE THAT THE ATMOSPHERE IN DELHI AND SURROUNDING AREAS WAS CALM, ORDERLY AND EVEN FESTIVE.

3. MESSAGES JUST RECEIVED FROM THE CONGENS REFLECT A SIMILAR ATMOSPHERE OF GENERAL TRANQUILITY AND HEAVY VOTER PARTICIPATION IN MOST AREAS (WITH THE EXCEPTION OF WEST BENGAL). BOMBAY REPORTS THAT THE TURN-OUT IN THE CITY APPEARED TO BE THE LARGEST (AS HIGH AS 75 PERCENT IN SOME AREAS) AND MOST ORDERLY EVER RECORDED FOR A LOK SABHA ELECTION AND THAT A SIMIAR PATTERN PREVAILED THROUGHOUT THE REST OF WESTERN INDIA. MADRAS REPORTS THAT VOTING SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN BRISK AND BUSINESSLIKE IN THE SOUTH, WITH ONLY ISOLATED INCIDENTS MARRING AN OTHERWISE PEACEFUL SCENE. TURN-OUT AVERAGED AROUND 60 PERCENT IN MOST AREAS. INCALCUTTA ON THE OTHER HAND, OPPOSITIONFEARS OF INTIMIDATION AT THE POLLS APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN VLID: THE CONGEN'S LOCAL EMPLOYEES (AS WELL AS PRESS ACCOUNTS) REPORT THAT RIGGING IN ITS VARIOUS FACETS--CAPTURING OF POLLING STATIONS,DRIVING OFF ANDBEATING OF OPPOSITION PARTY WORKERS, AND INTIMIDATION OF VOTERS--SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN FAIRLY WIDELY

PRACTICED BY CONGRESS AND CPI "GOONDAS". THEY REPORT THAT IN MANY SUCH INSTANCES POLICE WERE PRESENT BUT ACTIVE. CONGEN BELIEVES THAT IF SIMILAR PRACTICES ALSO HAVE OCCURRED IN THE RURAL AREAS,THE  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 NEW DE 03753 171024Z

PROSPECTS FOR CONGRESS/CPI CANDIDATES WINNING HAVE INCREASED. HOWEVER, THE POLLING IN SOLIDLY MIDDLE CALASS AREAS OF THE CITY APPEARS TO HAVE GONE SMOOTHLY. WE SHOULD ADD, OF COURSE, THAT SCATTERED VIOLENCE AND INTIMIDATION HAS BEEN THE RULE RATHER THAN THE EXCEPTION IN WEST BENGAL ELECTIONS IN THE LAST DECADE.

4. COMMENT: SPOKESMEN FOR BOTH SIDES QUICKLY CLAIMED THAT THE HEAVY TURNOUT WOULD FAVOR THEIR CANDIDATS: JANATA GENERAL SECRETARY L. K. ADVANI PREDICTED ON THE BASIS OF THE FIRST DAY'S PARTICIPATION THAT JANATA/CFD WOULD CAPTURE 325 SEATS OVERALL AND COULD EVEN REACH 400 WHEN ALLIED PARTIES WERE ADDED TO THAT NUMBER. CONGRESS GENERAL SECRETARY MRS. PURABI MUKHERJEE CLAIMED THAT CONGRESS WOULD WIN 220 OF THE 300 SEATS FOR WHICH POLLING WAS COMPLETED YESTERDAY AND THAT THE PARTY WOULD RETURN WITH ATWO-THIRDS MAJORITY. BECAUSEOF THE PRIOR ASSUMPTION THAT A HEAVY TURNOUT WOULD FAVOR THE OPPOSITION, MRS. MUKHERJEE MAY HAVE FELT COMPELLED TO MAKE THIS CONFIDENT PREDICTION OUT OF CONCERN FOR THE REMAINING THREE DAYS OF POLLING: CONGRESS MAY BE WORRIED THAT REPORTS OF HEAVY BALLOTING ON MARCH 16 COULD

DEMORALIZE CONGRESS WORKERS IN THE REMAINING DAYS.  
SCHNEIDER

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** VOTING, NATIONAL ELECTIONS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Sent Date:** 17-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Date:** 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1977NEWDE03753  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D770091-0880  
**Format:** TEL  
**From:** NEW DELHI  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1977/newtext/t19770349/aaaabqwr.tel  
**Line Count:** 118  
**Litigation Code IDs:**  
**Litigation Codes:**  
**Litigation History:**  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Message ID:** a9147db6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Office:** ACTION NEA  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 77 NEW DELHI 3728  
**Retention:** 0  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 18-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 3077428  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** INDIAN ELECTIONS: FIRST DAY'S POLLING PEACEFUL AND HEAVY  
**TAGS:** PINT, IN  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvwkey:** odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/a9147db6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009